



Project	Task Description	Time Estimate	Notes
Abstract	Review study and then write a brief synopsis highlighting study objectives, methods, results and conclusion.	3-5 hours	Assumes an average of 250 words. Usually written after the report or study has been written.
Article	Research topic and develop a fully referenced medical or scientific report on subject appropriate for print and online publications.	8-16 hours	Assumes an average of 500–1,500 words per article. Time may increase depending on research required.
Book chapter	Research topic, create outline, draft manuscript (includes bibliography, tables and illustrations), obtain permissions as needed for graphics, format to publisher's specs and submit for final review.	50-100 hours	Assumes an average of 5,000–10,000 words. Time may vary according to materials provided.
Brochure (Product information)	Compose informational or marketing pamphlet by organizing content with appropriate labels and working with designer to create overall graphic concept, including applicable photos or images. Add referencing and obtain permissions as needed.	12-34 hours	Time varies depending on size, scope, availability of graphic elements, amount of primary research/references required and complexity of clinical data presented.
Case study	Interview client; write, edit and proof customer's story (profile).	4-7 hours	Assumes an average of 800–1,000 words.
Clinical study (peer-reviewed study including scientific research studies, retrospective studies, meta-analyses, etc.)	Research topic, draft outline, write manuscript (includes bibliography and tables/graphics), obtain permissions for graphics as needed and submit for expert review.	40-80 hours; additional 20 hours for regulatory submission.	Assumes an average of 4,000–8,000 words. Time may vary according to materials provided.
CME monograph	Research, write, develop bibliography, edit, proof and create Q&A.	40-80 hours	Assumes an average of 4,000–8,000 words. Time may vary according to materials provided.
Conference coverage	Attend conference, gather data (tape, digital photos of slide presentations or posters, handwritten notes), interview experts on-site as needed and complete additional research as required. Write summary of session(s).	4-8 hours per 1 meeting hour	Includes time to attend meeting and summarize information in appropriate format. Time varies by complexity of topic.
Copy editing (AMA style)	Conduct critical review and edit of completed documentation materials (manuscripts, reports, etc.) for overall clarity, flow, style, punctuation, grammar and correct language. Fact-check references as needed.	4-8 pages per hour	Assumes different levels of editing from light style and grammar editing to deeper levels of structure and content development. Approximately 450 words per page.



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Direct mail	Attend input meeting for discussion of creative brief; develop draft copy and provide annotated copy for approval with necessary references.	8-6 hours	Work varies greatly with complexity of campaign and concepts required; requires solid understanding of PhRMA guidelines.
Executive summary	Write a detailed synopsis that summarizes entire study or report (includes problem statement, relevant context or background information, proposed alternatives or solutions and key conclusions).	6-12 hours	Assumes an average of one page; included as an independent section at the beginning of the report; can either substitute for or complement an abstract.
FDA briefing documents	Write information on drug or device, including chemistry, manufacturing, specifications, clinical and non-clinical summaries and tables and figures for use as support for questions designed to elicit FDA's input and agreement.	120-160 hours	Assumes multiple meetings to discuss issues or questions to be presented to FDA. Also assumes access to regulatory documents associated with the drug or device.
Journal ad	Attend conference or meeting; develop ad concept and themes, create content, collaborate with graphic designer for layout and edit. If developing a pharma ad, annotate and provide references for internal med-legal review.	12-20 hours	Assumes a one-page ad; also assumes ad is annotated with corresponding references as required by FDA (DDMAC). Tagline development would require additional time.
Informed consent form/patient information sheet	Write summary with purpose and background, procedures, risks and side effects, also including confidentiality, benefits, alternatives to participation, financial considerations, reimbursements, etc.	8-16 hours	Assumes access to study protocol, Investigator Brochure if a clinical drug/device study and IRB templates/guidelines.
Integrated summaries of efficacy	Document review, write sections, submit for expert (SME) review.	25-100 hours	Time varies widely depending on materials provided, number of clinical studies to summarize and the complexity of the product.
Investigator brochure	Completion—Work with experts to draft outline, write manuscript (includes bibliography, tables/graphics) and submit for expert (SME) review. Obtain permissions as required.	100-200+ hours	Time varies widely depending on product history and the clinical impact of the product. Also includes time for adjudication of reviewers' comments and final quality check of the product.
	Update—Work with experts to draft outline, write manuscript (includes bibliography, tables/graphics) and submit for expert (SME) review. Obtain permissions as required.	30-100+ hours	
Literature review	Research topic, draft outline, write manuscript, compile bibliography, and submit for expert or final review.	50-80 hours	Assumes an average manuscript length of 4,000–8,000 words. Time may vary according to materials provided.



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Manuscript preparation (from Clinical Study Report)	Write manuscript (includes bibliography, tables/graphics) and undergo expert (SME) review, revising as necessary. Obtain permissions as required.	35-70 hours	Assumes an average manuscript length of 4,000–8,000 words.
Medical grant writing	Attend meetings, contact all participants, gather necessary documentation and write specific sections of the document with SME direction.	100-150 hours	Assumes budgeting and relevant references are provided, including participants' CVs.
Messaging/positioning statements	Attend client input meeting; research product data, competitors and relevant corporate information such as IR press releases and analyst calls; draft and revise through interactive testing if necessary; attend focus groups as required.	80-100 hours	Time varies depending on amount of research available and complexity of messaging; assumes 30–40 main messages with 5 to 8 supporting messages.
Needs assessment	Research current data, write document, conduct expert interviews as needed and provide references. Identify Gaps and Solutions if for ACCME.	10-18 hours	Assumes an average length of 500–1500 words. Time may vary according to materials provided.
Newsletter	Gather details; write, edit and proof informational newsletter for print or electronic use; work with art director to lay out in graphical format with any applicable images; provide permissions as needed.	5-10 hours	Assumes 1- to 2-page newsletter with graphics. Time varies depending on information provided beforehand as well as pre-existing template. Number of interviews can extend time.
Patient brochure	Meet to review creative brief (scope and project objectives); discuss “look and feel” of brochure with art director and prepare outline of topics, including major headlines; write draft copy and prepare revised draft with annotations for medical or legal review. Revise based on feedback.	18-24 hours	Assumes 8–12 page brochure; requires understanding of DDMAC guidelines for patient information, including presentation of efficacy and safety information if written for pharma.
Poster	Include abstract, write content for body of poster and generate tables, references and graphs as needed.	18-36 hours	Time varies greatly depending on material provided. Includes adjudicating review comments from author.
PowerPoint presentations for Web cast programs	Write and format slides from data and references; provide notes where indicated; obtain permissions as required.	25-30 hours	Assumes 40–50 slides per 60-minute Web cast. Also assumes references and permissions are provided to the writer.
Press release	Interview expert, write, edit and proof.	2-3 hours	Assumes an average of 500–800 words.
Product manual (medical devices, software applications, equipment)	Meet with SMEs, gather materials, review existing documentation, create detailed outline, and write content for medical device, software application or equipment. Capture and include screen shots, table of contents, appendices, tables/flowcharts and graphics. Obtain permissions as required.	70-100+ hours	Time varies greatly depending on feedback process, existing documentation, length of manual, and complexity of product and writer's knowledge base. Result is a printed/online book ready for customer use or FDA submission, including front and back matter, as well as necessary appendices.



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Protocols for clinical research studies	Meet with experts as needed, compile relevant material and review content with clinical review committee.	80-150 hours	Assumes expert input and access to template, Investigator Brochure and other relevant regulatory documents.
Sales letter	Collect key information and sales objectives to be conveyed in letter, draft letter, edit and proof.	2-3 hours	Assumes 300–500 words and all important key messages as well as product information is provided.
Sell sheet	Attend client input meeting; write draft from available background materials and incorporate supporting photos/graphics. May work with art director for layout concept.	4-6 hours	Assumes two-sided sell sheet with bulleted copy; shorter time required if format already established.
Scientific research paper	Research topic, draft outline, draft manuscript, compile bibliography and submit for expert review.	40-80 hours	Assumes an average manuscript length of 4,000–8,000 words. Time may vary according to materials provided.
Scientific slide presentation	Research topic, compile references, develop presentation, including tables and charts. Obtain permissions as required.	60-80 hours	Assumes average length of 20 slides. Time may vary according to graphics and references provided.
Training online video	Write narrative script; record mouse movements, record voice narration, add applicable call-out messages to video and generate .avi or other movie files.	3-5 hours per video	Assumes 1- to 3-minute demonstration video clip used for training purposes, highlighting specific feature or procedure of online application, process or software. Utilizes video capturing software to compose video clips.
Training documentation	Write and edit procedural documents; may require at least one training demonstration or meeting.	10-30 hours	Time varies on length of training materials; common materials include a Quick Start Guide. Attendance at applicable conferences or workshops may be required.
Web development	Design—Develop Web site concept and themes, as well as design structure and organization.	5-10 hours	Assumes at least one meeting to discuss site objectives. Writer should be experienced with FAQs, bulleted lists, short and concise paragraphs and search engine optimization.
	Writing—Provide content writing and editing.	2-3 hours per page	
White paper	Research topic, draft manuscript with executive summary (includes tables/illustrations), obtain permissions for graphics as needed, edit and proof.	40-80 hours	Assumes different levels of editing from light style and grammar editing to deeper levels of structure and content development.

Note: This document is not intended to address all types and levels of projects. It is a tool for estimating “average” projects in size and complexity. Since every project is unique, we recommend a professional writer be involved in developing the final plan and estimate. Additional time required for meetings and travel is unique to each client/project and should be factored into the final estimate as well. © 2013 Copyright by Writing Assistance, Inc. This document may be printed, republished and distributed as long as it is not altered.